

the characters from great literature than on her clinical experience; but the life of the unhappy George Sand provides the psychological material for a moving account of unresolved ambivalence towards the bisexual disposition. But according to the author the essential core of woman is always feminine; beneath the façade of aggressive masculinity is the tenderness and desire for feminine gratification which has been renounced.

To the general reader, many, indeed the majority of works by psychoanalysts leave the impression of the psyche's isolation from its environment. The personalities in the individual's life who are so powerfully represented in the private universe of her psychic structure have no "real" existence for her. They exist only in so far as they are the symbols of pleasure or "unpleasure," frustration or gratification. To a certain extent the writer's sympathy and admiration for her sex has transcribed this basic Freudianism into acceptable terms. It is true that many of the portraits in her gallery say unaffectedly "if I love you, what is that to you?", yet the unreal solipsistic view of interpersonal relationships is avoided.

There is evidence in this book of a tendency now developing in certain psychoanalytical circles towards a broader theoretical basis in the recognition of general biological and sociological principles. We are not concerned here with divergences of opinion among theorists about such matters as the importance of penis envy in the development of the "active" woman, although most will welcome Dr. Deutsch's rejection of the importance of this concept, always difficult to accept. More important is the fact that the writer recognizes the predisposing influences of the somatic constitution. The initial bisexual nature of the constitution is entirely in keeping with the recent findings of physiological psychology. Hormones are found to influence the maturation processes by which the differentiation of heterosexuality and its accompanying psychological valencies are brought about.

The influence of the social and cultural milieu on woman's psyche is considered in

the last chapter. Here again the author depends little upon her personal experience and relies on the account of three generations of women in the Russian Revolution by Alexandra Kollontay in her book *The Ways of Love*. The release of "activity" in woman as a result of social and cultural upheavals is recognized as a fact of overt behaviour. Yet this is only a superficial intensification of one side of the psychic equilibrium. The feminine core remains unchanged. "The primeval feminine Autonoë, the fertile Demeter, the motherless Pallas Athene, the androgynous Amazon are all creations of a mythologic fantasy; yet they seem to have existed in all societies, . . . recur constantly, always the same, yet always different, according to their culture, their race and the degree of historical development of their society." This book will be welcomed for its sincerity and real insight. With an approach nearer to that of the general biological sciences, it is a significant contribution towards establishing common ground among the various schools studying human behaviour.

DENIS HILL.

MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY

Schmiedeler, Father Edgar. *Marriage and the Family. A Text for a Course on Marriage and the Family for use in Catholic Schools.* New York and London, 1946. McGraw-Hill. Pp. xii+285. Price 9s.

THE number of American text-books on the subject of marriage and the family grows apace, and the field must be near saturation point. This book justifies its existence, however, by taking a particular approach and catering for a particular community. The author is a Roman Catholic priest, who has recently been appointed a vice-chairman of one of the Committees of the National Conference on Family Relations in the U.S.A., and is the author of several other works in this field. The book is expressly designed

for use in Roman Catholic schools and colleges. It has two aims—"First, to give the student directly a certain amount of information and guidance regarding marriage and family life; second, to induce him to observe, to think ahead, to study further, and to plan regarding his own future marriage and family life" (page 3).

The method adopted by Father Schmiedeler is to expound in a popular way the encyclical of Pope Pius XI on "Christian Marriage." The language is lucid, the style good, and the book is attractively illustrated with photographs. The author clearly knows his subject, and, within the inevitable limits set by Roman Catholic doctrine, is sound and balanced in his conclusions.

Father Schmiedeler has something to say about eugenics. Referring to the venereal diseases, he says: "It should be the expected thing that a voluntary exchange of medical

certificates take place before marriage." Then he goes on—"Much the same rule applies with regard to mental disease—insanity, feeble-mindedness, and epilepsy. In varying degrees all these are inherited. It is not always possible to know in a specific case whether a disease or weakness is inherited or not. However, where cases are fairly common in a family, there is good reason to believe that it is a hereditary trait and carries with it the danger of transmission to offspring. An individual may well think seriously before marrying into such a family" (page 30).

This book should be found useful not only by Roman Catholics but also by non-Catholics who want a simple exposition of what might be called the liberal Catholic view of marriage and the family.

DAVID R. MACE.

OTHER NOTICES

Thomas, Harold. *People who live in glass houses as seen by a V.D. orderly.* London, 1945. Central Council for Health Education. Pp. 79. Price 9d.

IN a world overshadowed by the atomic bomb, total war, and mass starvation, obsession with venereal disease is surely a symptom of neurosis either in the individual or in society.

This pamphlet contains "horrible warning" stories as unusual as the appearance of a white blackbird. Given a reasonably hygienic standard of life the risks of infection run even by the licentious are small. The enormous increase in venereal disease during recent years has been due to war conditions combined with ignorance and the official policy of reducing decent accommodation for love-making to a minimum. The author underestimates the prophylactic efficiency of the condom and gives no instruction in its use. Antiseptic chemicals

and E.T. packets are deprecatingly referred to, but the reader is left in ignorance of the existence of calomel ointment and its use. In short, Mr. Thomas (or perhaps his publishers) are more interested in the preservation of chastity than the prevention of venereal disease.

The author has some interesting and intellectually honest things to say about treatment; and the pamphlet might with advantage be placed in the hands of everyone who has contracted venereal disease. For the more fortunate, however, the atmosphere of fear and pusillanimity created by officially sponsored propaganda is psychologically harmful both for the individual and for society at large. It is regrettable that tendentious half-truth of this nature should see the light when the honest work of Marie Stopes on the subject and the straightforward literature of the National Council for the Prevention of Venereal Disease is available.

ALEC CRAIG.